



For immediate release
June 11, 2009

Plans major hub for Orillia

ORION congratulates Lakehead and Orillia at new campus groundbreaking

ORILLIA – ORION, Ontario's advanced research and education network, congratulates Lakehead University and Orillia on the groundbreaking for Lakehead's permanent campus here earlier today.

The Ontario Research and Innovation Optical Network (ORION), which connects Lakehead's Orillia facilities to Lakehead's main campus in Thunder Bay, is now working with Lakehead to extend advanced network links to the Orillia campus, when completed.

Dignitaries gathered this morning for the official groundbreaking on the \$45 million construction project, which includes the first three buildings for Lakehead's new campus, on an 85 acre site donated by the City of Orillia.

"We are looking forward to working with Lakehead and the community to help derive the full benefits of advanced networks and next-generation technologies for research, teaching and learning," says Phil Baker, ORION's President and CEO. "We are proud to be part of this exciting future," he said.

Maxim Jean-Louis, chairman of the ORION Board of Directors and President of Contact North/Contact Nord, notes that today's groundbreaking "sends a powerful signal about our confidence in the future and prosperity of the entire region. We commend all the partners who have come together to establish a vision and an anchor for economic development and innovation here in this community," he said.

Lakehead currently uses its ultra high-speed ORION connection to link Orillia staff, faculty and students back to its main campus in Thunder Bay, ensuring seamless connectivity between the two locations. It also provides its Orillia site with a direct, ultra high-capacity link to the world's top science, research and education networks, including Canada's CANARIE network, Internet2 in the US and other top networks in Asia, Europe and around the globe.

ORION is now working with Lakehead to establish enhanced connectivity to the permanent campus, including a state-of-the-art telecommunications Point-of-Presence (PoP). "This will make Orillia a major ORION hub for the entire region," said Baker.

About ORION

The Ontario Research and Innovation Optical Network (ORION), a not-for-profit organization, is Ontario's ultra high-speed research and education network which connects all of Ontario's universities, most colleges, several medical and other public research facilities and a growing number of school boards to one another and to the global grid of research and education networks. Stretching 5,800 kilometres over 21 communities throughout Ontario, ORION connects over one million Ontario researchers, scientists, students, teachers and staff to critical infrastructure for research, education and innovation. Visit www.orion.on.ca.

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Media Contacts:

Tamara Stoll, Communications Officer
416-507-9860 x224
tamara.stoll@orion.on.ca